

THE PRESBYTERIAN ALLIANCE.

A conference of delegates from the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches throughout the world was held in London in the summer of 1875. Dr. Stuart Robinson, of Louisville, was the one representative of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, South. Called by this Conference, the First General Council met in St. Giles' Church, Edinburgh, July 3, 1877. From our church there were present fourteen delegates, of whom the one survivor, we believe, is the Rev. Dr. J. W. Lupton, now in Winchester, Va. The Second Council was held in 1880 in Philadelphia. The Seventh Council met in 1899 in Washington City and the Eighth in Liverpool, in 1904.

The Ninth Council of the Reformed and Presbyterian Churches of the world is now in session, June 15 to 25, in the Fifth Avenue Church, New York City, with about 300 delegates, who represent not only the Reformed and Presbyterian Churches of the United States and Canada, but also those of England, Ireland, Scotland, France, Holland, Germany, Belgium, Hungary, Switzerland, Italy, South Africa, Australia and other lands.

The Reformed faith and Presbyterian polity, as taught by the Reformers, Calvin, Knox and others, was not local, nor national, but catholic and worldwide in its outlook and its adaptation. Lutheranism was and is today German, and Anglicanism was and is English. They have not had extension among other people or in other languages. The Reformed Church has grown in many nations, using many various languages.

A great end accomplished has been to make these bodies of common faith and practice well known to each other. Encouragement has been given to the weak, the tried and persecuted. Concert of action has been secured as to missions and literature and other forms of church life and activity.

Large delegations are provided for, but rather limited numbers, because of the expenses of travel and to avoid protracted absences from posts of duty. An important element of usefulness is found in the published volume of proceedings and addresses.

NOTES IN PASSING.

By Bert.

An officer of the church who has grave doubts of the divinity of Christ was the remarkable case I was called to consult with the other day. He explained that he had doubts of his fitness for the position when he was installed. He told his pastor of his trouble, but the church was small and needed men, and he stood well in the community, and the pastor thought his trouble would pass away by attention to the duties of church membership reinforced by the obligations of an officer.

He knew so many men prominent in business circles, faultless in character and apparently happy who refused to believe in the divinity of Christ that he had come to regard it as a matter of indifference whether it was accepted or not. Yet his conscience was not at rest. He wanted light. I discovered he had read much of many things, but little of the Bible. I recommended him to go upon his knees to God in

an honest prayer for enlightenment and prayerfully read the Gospel of John. For I believe no man can, with an open mind seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit, read John and refuse the divinity of Christ.

It is to my mind one of the wonders of the age that any man can look upon the marvels being daily wrought by the Scriptures of Divine Truth whose very heart is the divinity of Christ and refuse to accept it. Jean Paul Richter says of him that, "Being the holiest among the mighty, and the mightiest among the holy, he has lifted with his pierced hand empires off their hinges and has turned the stream of centuries out of its channel, and still governs the ages." All who sincerely believe in him love him with a love which glorifies all life. This is to me an evidence of his divinity. The Mohammedan may believe with all the strength of his fanatical soul in Mohammed, but he can not love him. Neither can the blinded follower of any other religious guide the world has ever known. Only Jesus Christ possesses the mysterious power to transfer the strongest and purest affections of the heart to himself.

"Sin is that abominable thing that God hates." But what is sin? Strange as it may seem, many have very hazy ideas upon this very important subject. There are certain things, such as the violation of the commandments, which appeal to all as being contrary to the will of God. But there are also other sins which are not generally recognized as such and are therefore all the more dangerous. There are many things right in themselves which become sin when indulged in at the wrong time or in the wrong place. For example, reading a newspaper or magazine is perfectly legitimate, indeed almost necessary. But if that paper be allowed to take the place and time of the worship of God, it at once loses its innocence and becomes a sin. Duties never conflict. Each, by the appointment of God, has its set time and proper place; to oust one from its own time or place in favor of another is a sin against that duty. A simple illustration will make that clear. A business man employs a young man to assist in his office. He comes in and finds this youth reading a magazine at a time which ought to be given to the important business of the office. His displeasure is fully warranted. The clerk has sinned against the business. This is an indictment against the reading of the Sunday newspaper at a time when God calls to his house and service. It is putting something before God. And he says, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

Anything which loosens your grasp upon great spiritual duties, or blinds you to great spiritual privileges, is sin. Anything which interferes with your joy in religious duty, or makes its performance irksome, is sin. Anything which interferes regularly with your devotional life is sin. And all of these things may be done by things not in themselves wrong.

Pray earnestly for the open eyes to see and the willing spirit to do the things which belong to your peace.

The Son of Man was born once in order that man might be born again.